

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

MICHIGAN AVENUE AT ADAMS STREET CHICAGO 3 ILLINOIS TELEPHONE CENTRAL 6-7080

November 30, 1959.

Mr. Frank B. Hubachek,
c/o Hubachek and Kelly,
Prudential Plaza,
Chicago, Illinois.

Dear Mr. Hubachek:

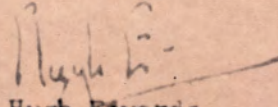
Enclosed is my reply to Mr. Goldschmidt in regard to the Pryzgodę Buch
der Toten as well as his letter in which he made the quotation concerning
the book. I have notified Miss Schoneman of your approval of the purchase
of the three items on the Wittenborn list which we need and we are very
pleased that we are to have them here.

It was good to talk with you last Wednesday and I appreciate very much
that Mr. Blair will help us in making contacts with Mr. McGraw. If we
could own the Westons, the Jamies and Newhall collections----- & Or is
that as vain and greedy as wanting the Corvette?

This morning I made a tentative schedule of photographic shows and it
would be good if we could have an exhibition of the work of John Szarkowski
during the late spring and early summer. This would follow the photographs
of Lewis Hine, who recorded the world of American people from about 1900
through the 1930's. These will come from Eastman House and will be shown
from April 8th through May 8th. John Szarkowski would follow this show
from May 13th through July 10th (a good season for visitors). After his
exhibition will come the portraits of celebrities made by George Platt
Lynes during the 1930's. This will give us variety, plenty of contrast
and I like the sequence. I should like to get in touch with John Szarkowski
soon, but thought you might like to speak to him about this before I do.
I'll appreciate it very much if you have Miss Baker call and let me know.

All good wishes and I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,


Hugh Edwards.

enclosures

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

MICHIGAN AVENUE AT ADAMS STREET CHICAGO 3 ILLINOIS TELEPHONE CENTRAL 6-7080

December 9, 1959.

Mr. John Szarkowski,
1216 Eleventh Avenue, West,
Ashland,
Wisconsin.

Dear Mr. Szarkowski:

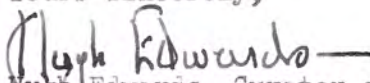
Last year it was decided to add the Art Institute's collection of photographs to the Department of Prints and Drawings and I was asked to become their custodian. Early in November we resumed our photographic exhibitions in a new gallery. The initial showing, Masterpieces of Photography from the Museum's Collection, was most successful and the current exhibition, Alexander Gardner's Photographic Sketch Book of the Civil War, has also been very popular. It is my plan to intersperse contemporary shows with historical exhibitions, hoping to build up a collection which will be of use to students of photographic history and illustrate the growth of the traditions of those artists who have practiced photography as an independent esthetic medium.

I have admired your work since seeing the Sullivan photographs in 1956 and you were in my mind when I began to make a schedule of exhibitions. Recently I have drawn up a tentative list and wonder if you would be interested in a show during the coming spring and early summer, say from May 13th to July 10th. This is a good season for visitors to Chicago and your prints would be seen by even more than our usual public. I should like very much to hear from you in regard to this. We would need about one hundred prints from which to choose, preferably in black and white and not in big enlargements. In hanging we try to let the pictures speak for themselves and do not go in for "knock-out" installations. This has been satisfactory so far. I assure you that your prints will be handled with great care, as work on the shows is done by the preparator of the Department of Prints and Drawings and two students who are quite expert at handling photographs.

I have spoken with Mr. Hubachek concerning this exhibition and he has said he would write you. I shall appreciate hearing from you if you are interested in the show and if so, it would be good to have the prints as soon as possible.

With best regards, I am

Yours sincerely,


Hugh Edwards, Curator of Photography,
Associate Curator of Prints and Drawings.

he

Mr. Hugh Edwards, Curator of Photography
The Art Institute of Chicago
Michigan at Adams
Chicago 3

Dear Mr. Edwards:

I shall of course be most pleased to have my work exhibited at the Institute. Your new photographic program sounds very good indeed--it is not often that I regard the distance between Ashland and Chicago as anything but an advantage, but I do feel put out at being four hundred and fifty miles from the Gardner show.

I am not sure that I am still on your announcement mailing list; if not would you have my name added?

One hundred prints is quite an order. At the moment the Walker Art Center has two different exhibitions circulating, so I will have to do a considerable amount of printing to accumulate roughly that number of prints that I would like to show. I should be able to do this work within the next six weeks. I tentatively plan to make a trip east toward the end of January, and I could leave the prints with you at that time.

This arrangement would also serve another function. I am, and for some years have been, very interested in the possibilities of photographs used cumulatively, where the sum might be capable of an expressive intensity and freedom greater than that of the isolated prints, seen singly. For this reason I would like to participate in the selection of the prints to be exhibited. Together we might find groupings--sometimes based on subject matter, and sometimes on more subjective relationships--which would divide the show into four or five "chapters", and form a more cohesive show. I don't refer to special exhibition techniques, but simply to the selection, sequence, and grouping of prints.

Most of my prints are either 8 x 10 or 11 x 14, mounted on 15 x 19 boards. An occasional 16 x 20 might be effective (or rather, 15 x 19, bled on the board). Does this come under the category of the big enlargements that you would prefer to avoid?

I shall proceed to round up a group of prints. Please let me know if the schedule above will be satisfactory.

Best regards,

15Dec59

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

MICHIGAN AVENUE AT ADAMS STREET CHICAGO 3 ILLINOIS TELEPHONE CENTRAL 6-7080

December 17, 1959.

Mr. John Szarkowski,
1216 Eleventh Avenue, West,
Ashland,
Wisconsin.

Dear Mr. Szarkowski:

I was very happy to receive your letter this morning and to read you are interested in having an exhibition here. I have spent some very stimulating hours this fall with The Face of Minnesota and look forward to seeing your original prints.

One hundred prints is indeed a large number and I mentioned it only to be sure we would have enough to present a satisfactory representation of your work. Now that you say you are coming to Chicago at the end of January, matters become much simpler and I am certain the number of photographs you need to bring will be much less than a hundred. The gallery which has been assigned for the showing of photographs is a long, narrow room. Like all galleries, it has both its advantages and disadvantages. In our first show we were able to display fifty-two prints in four different sizes, 12 x 14", 14 x 18", 18 x 22", 22 x 28", so I am sure seventy prints will be a generous number - if you come along with them. It is necessary to mount photographs in our permanent collection here to conform with the sizes used for our collection of prints and drawings (these are the same as those stated above) since this simplifies our many storage problems. All our shows must be hung under glass. This is unfortunate in some cases, but imperative in a museum frequented by such large and varied crowds as those which visit the Art Institute. The glass used is cut to the same sizes as the mats. Therefore, it would be best to bring as many unmatted prints as possible and they can be matted here as you think best. We have a large press for drymounting.

I hope all this does not seem too forbidding. You will find it will work out to be quite simple when you are here. I want merely to prepare you for the limitations and suggest it would be best to bring the photographs unmounted.

I wish you had seen the Gardner show. It was well attended, considering the fact that it had no publicity. Your name is on our mailing list and you will receive announcements whenever they are printed. Our limited budget for photographic exhibitions allows only for the most necessary expenses, so that we cannot issue announcements of all shows. However, you will receive one soon of our next exhibition, My Camera and I in the Loop by Ray K. Metzker, and I am very pleased you are coming in January as it will still be hanging. I am enthusiastic about Metzker's work and proud we are the first to present a one-man showing of it.

Please write me when you plan to come. I anticipate meeting you and - as it has always been an experience to see examples of your work which I have not seen before - I am impatient to look at the work you will bring with you.

Best regards and all good wishes for a happy holiday,

Sincerely, *Mugh Edwards* -

Mr. Hugh Edwards, Curator of Photography
The Art Institute of Chicago
Michigan at Adams
Chicago 3

Dear Mr. Edwards:

I have been trying since the first of the year to assemble a group of prints to show you, but a dreary succession of inescapable and prior obligations have hung on beyond their appointed time, and in consequence I still have a fair way to go to produce the things that I would like you to see.

This coming week, however, should be mostly mine. Would it be acceptable to you if I came in on Monday, February 8? If this is not a good day for you, simply tell me the first day following when you can be free; I will be there when you say.

I will be bringing some prints that are mounted on 15 x 19 boards, since it would be hopeless to try to reprint everything. There are three ways, I think, that we can make these conform to your sizes: (1) for 8 x 10s, the mounts can be cut down to 14 x 18; for 11 x 14s, the print can be (2) trimmed and remounted, which produces a thickness that I do not find altogether agreeable, or (3) covered with a thin cut-out mat of the proper size. I trust we will be able to work out something.

Best regards,

28Jan60

Mr. Hugh Edwards, Curator of Photography
The Art Institute of Chicago
Michigan at Adams
Chicago 3

Dear Hugh:

I called the museum of couple of weeks ago on my way back from Cincinnati, to ask whether (1) you had any chores for me to perform in connection with the exhibition, and (2) you were still in the mood to offer a guided tour through the labarinthine wonders of BEN HUR. Unhappily, you were still in the East.

An idea has just occurred to me which, I suppose, might conceivably be of value. If you would like to do an announcement or whatever for my show, but are short of funds, might it be possible that the U. of M. Press might help? I should expect that they would at least loan a plate or two, and they might even think it worthwhile to share printing expense in exchange for a credit line. Please understand that I am not trying to promote this; I simply suggest the possibility. The Institute may well have a policy of not engaging in such mutual back-scratching. If you are interested, I would be happy to write John Ervin Jr., the Director.

I had a very enjoyable day at the museum, meeting and talking to you and your assistants. I hope that I will be able to get down during the show to continue the good conversation.

Best regards,

25 March 60

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

MICHIGAN AVENUE AT ADAMS STREET CHICAGO 3 ILLINOIS TELEPHONE CENTRAL 6-7080

March 29, 1960.

Mr. John Szarkowski,
1216 Eleventh Avenue, West,
Ashland,
Wisconsin.

Dear John:

I was happy to receive your letter. Writing you has been in my mind ever since the day you were here, but I went to New York soon after your visit and following my return there has been so much to do and I have thought of so much to say to you that I suppose I have been overwhelmed by it all. Now that your letter has come, it clears up many small matters and my intention of writing today is made much simpler.

I did enjoy your visit here and regretted so much you could not stay longer. When I returned from New York it was a great disappointment to have missed you. Maybe we will see Ben-Hur yet! There is a great deal I want to tell you about the days in New York: the chase for Robert Frank, the afternoon spent with Eugene Smith, the dinner and evening spent with Cartier-Bresson, not to speak of a wonderful time with Grace Mayer. You must come again - photography is a great bait for the garrulous and once started talking about it, you can never end.

As you said I might do so, I took two of your prints to the jury meeting of the Photography in the Fine Arts show. I was rather hesitant about this as both of them were pictures we want for our exhibition. However, I took the risk, hoping you would be able to make other prints for us. They are The Pond and Farm in Caledonia. The jury was most enthusiastic about your work and I was very happy about this. Nevertheless, I am afraid I may have caused you a lot of extra work. I am enclosing a copy of a letter I have just received in regard to your prints and I shall notify Mr. Dmitri I have forwarded it and the two forms to you. It does seem an awful chore to make so many prints and I feel guilty indeed for having brought all this down on your head, especially since I must ask you to make prints of each of these subjects for us as we will need them for the show.

Your suggestion in regard to a folder concerning your show is indeed welcome. My hope, in the beginning, was to have a small catalogue for each exhibition of the work of contemporary photographers, but it is almost impossible with the small budget unless we have some outside assistance. I do want to have a folder for people to take away from your show. Our fiscal year ends July 1st and your exhibition closes July 10th,

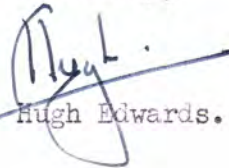
so I have hopes. The loan of a cut would do a great deal to cut down the cost. The subjects I have thought of may be found on the following pages of The Face of Minnesota: 15, 24, 46-47, 91, 94-95, 107, 142, 148, 180, 193, 247, and I must not forget 45 which - for my personal taste - is one of the most wonderful photographs I have ever seen. I have not included any from The Idea of Louis Sullivan - although there are many possibilities there - for I feel this exhibition should be made up mostly of your work since the publication of that book.

I shall talk with Mr. Carini about this as soon as possible and write you what he says.

Forgive this miserable and hurried letter - I must end it now or you will never receive it. There is still a world to say. Be sure to come again.

All good wishes and best regards,

Sincerely,


Hugh Edwards.

The Panel is the print with the large dark form^{is a print} in the water in the background.

Dear Hugh:

I don't think I ever said that I thought your list of plates from the Minnesota book was an excellent one, and that I would be very happy to have any of them used in a brochure, ~~if~~ I mean folder, if one materializes.

Now I must run out to the Marengo River and go trout fishing.

Regards,

5May60

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

MICHIGAN AVENUE AT ADAMS STREET CHICAGO 3 ILLINOIS TELEPHONE CENTRAL 6-7080

June 14, 1960.

Mr. John Szarkowski,
1216 Eleventh Avenue, West,
Ashland,
Wisconsin.

Dear John:

I hope you will forgive me for not having written since the show opened. We have been unusually busy here and there has not been a moment for doing the things one would like to do most. We enjoyed your father's visit and I wish he could have stayed longer. It was a good tonic to see him and forget for awhile the useless and consuming tensions which dwell with one in this city. The morning he arrived we were just on the point of opening the gallery - I wish he might have stayed and seen some of the enthusiastic people who have enjoyed your photographs since that day.

I am very disappointed we were unable to afford a printed folder with a reproduction of one of the prints. I had written Mr. Hubachek about this but he has been so occupied for the last two months we have hardly seen him at all. When he came down for the committee meeting he said he was agreeable to helping with a brochure but by that time it was too late to have it ready in time for the exhibition. I do regret this - it is another of the many proofs that we need more in our budget so that we might have a small publication for each show. I hope only that you understand and will forgive this. In the gallery we have copies of ^{an} a list of the photographs which each visitor may take away with him.

The attendance for the fourteen days, according to our records, has been 4,164 visitors. This is very good and its most satisfying aspect is the enthusiasm with which the pictures have been received. I am very grateful you have made this show possible for us.

I'll write again soon. Be sure to give my best regards to your father and also your mother with whom I talked on the 'phone. And I hope you will be able to come down to Chicago sometime before long as all of us enjoyed your last visit so much and look forward to another.

Sincerely,



P.S. Prime White arrives tomorrow in state
in Oregon.

Mr. Hugh Edwards, Curator of Photography
Art Institute of Chicago
Chicago 3

Dear Hugh:

I have been very busy all summer long--accomplishing next to nothing, but doing a great deal of time-consuming worrying, and trying to fool the local money lenders that I am a good risk, in order to get my new house (in my old quarry) finally in the ground, and everything in general has been indecisive, inconclusive, and garbled, in which circumstances I find it very difficult to write letters, or even one reasonably coherent sentence, as you can plainly see.

However I finally did screw up my sense of purpose to the point of opening, a week or so ago, the prints from the exhibition, and I must thank you profoundly for the fact that I found not a dogged ear nor a scratched face. I have never received this kind of treatment from a museum before, and it is a pretty heart-warming experience.

If the show was reviewed in the local papers, I would enjoy reading what they had to say.

I have received my copy of THIS IS THE AMERICAN EARTH, and I am afraid that I don't really think that it is as good as it might have been. I don't remember what publication you were reviewing it for, and I would like very much to read your comments. The book exhorts rather than demonstrates, and it is too long for an exhortation. Something about conservation seems to bring out the Pharisee in its supporters: what we say and do may not actually improve matters any, but it certainly does demonstrate that we are much more moral than most people. Also, although they are perfectly magnificent pictures, I think that the book contains too many of Adams' Wagnerian backdrop landscapes.

Well when I finally find the money to do my book on the Quetico-Superior area, I will remember with anguish how I claimed I could have done AMERICAN EARTH better, so I had better stop before backing myself into an even more embarrassing corner.

Best cheer, and again, thanks.

8Sept60

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

MICHIGAN AVENUE AT ADAMS STREET CHICAGO 3 ILLINOIS TELEPHONE CENTRAL 6-7080

December 20, 1960.

Mr. John Szarkowski,
1216 Eleventh Avenue, West,
Ashland,
Wisconsin.

Dear John:

I was overjoyed to open your package and find it contained the photograph which - of several of yours - I had wished to own myself and hang where I could see it every day. This picture is one of the best I know and it will always be good to have it bring back, at any time, the light of early morning in the hours so loved by Thoreau and which he said was the only time of day in which to learn to know the Greeks. Thanks, also, for the greeting which accompanied the gift. I am very happy about all this and will always remember your thoughtfulness in having done this for me.

I wish I could see you and have a long talk. The Clarence John Laughlin show in which we became involved over a year ago (almost before I had gathered my wits about photography) is now on the walls. Laughlin paid us a visit about a month ago and I have not fully recovered. More than once I have gone back to reread your brief account of today's photographic attitudes and it has comforted and reassured me.

I talked with Robert Frank on the 'phone last Saturday and he assured me he will send his prints for an exhibition. I don't believe I talked with you about his work. I admire it very much and find him to be one of the few people of exceptional gifts who use the camera as a camera. Nobody has been so much abused as he has - he is the epitome of those substitutional dangers (something like Elvis Presley) who are described as such dangers to our national honor by the press copy writers. I suppose you read all the things they said about The Americans, resulting in its being remaindered at an early age.

I hope you are well and one of these days I'll telephone you and have a talk. Thanks again for making the holidays more enjoyable. Be sure to have a good time yourself and remember me to your father and mother.

Sincerely,

Thyghs

P.S. Pardon this miserable letter - written in such haste because I want it to reach you as soon as possible.